U.S. Department of Education
2022 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [X] Title I [ ] Charter [ ] Magnet [ ] Choice

Name of Principal Mrs. Dena Jaminet
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Sanford Elementary School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 755 2nd Street
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Sanford State CO Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 81151-0039

County Conejos

Telephone (719) 274-5167 Fax

Web site/URL https://www.sanfordschools.org E-mail djaminet@sanfordschools.org

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I- Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

(Principal’s Signature) Date

Name of Superintendent* Mr. Kevin Edgar E-mail kedgar@sanfordschools.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Sanford 6J School District Tel. (719) 274-5167

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I- Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

(Superintendent’s Signature) Date

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mr. Logan Larsen
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I- Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

(School Board President’s/Chairperson’s Signature) Date

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

*Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, leave blank.
PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.

2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2021 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.

3. The school configuration must include one or more of grades K-12. Schools located on the same campus (physical location and mailing address) must apply as an entire school (i.e. K-8; 6-12; K-12 school). Two (or more) schools located on separate campuses, must apply individually even if they have the same principal. A single school located on multiple campuses with one principal must apply as an entire school.

4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2016 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.

5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 or 2021.

6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.

7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.

8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.

9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.

10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district, as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.

11. The nominated school has, or is subject to, a nondiscrimination policy (provide either a link to the policy or submit a text of the policy), is committed to equal opportunity for all students and all staff consistent with applicable law and does not have any outstanding findings of unlawful discrimination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s nomination and/or rescind a school’s award if unlawful discrimination is later discovered.
12. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s nomination and/or rescind a school’s award if one of these eligibility requirements is later discovered to have not been met or otherwise been violated.
PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the current school year (2021-2022) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools. For charter schools: If a charter school is part of the public school system, information should be provided for the public school district. If a charter school is considered its own district or part of a charter district, the information provided should reflect that.)

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
   - 0 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
   - 0 Middle/Junior high schools
   - 0 High schools
   - 1 K-12 schools

   1 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools. Only include demographic data for the nominated school, not for the district.)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located. If unsure, refer to NCES database for correct category: [https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/](https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/) (Find your school and check “Locale”)
   - [ ] Urban (city or town)
   - [ ] Suburban
   - [X ] Rural

3. Number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school. Include all students enrolled, in-person, participating in a hybrid model, or online only. If online schooling or other COVID-19 school issues make this difficult to obtain, provide the most accurate and up-to-date information available:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th># of Males</th>
<th># of Females</th>
<th>Grade Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PreK</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 or higher</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Students</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Schools that house PreK programs should count preschool students only if the school administration is responsible for the program.
4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):  
- 0.3 % American Indian or Alaska Native  
- 0 % Asian  
- 0.5 % Black or African American  
- 30.8 % Hispanic or Latino  
- 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander  
- 68.1 % White  
- 0.3 % Two or more races  
\[100 \% \text{ Total}\]

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 Federal Register provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2020 - 2021 school year: 10%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain:

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Number of students who transferred to the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Number of students who transferred from the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020</td>
<td>222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
   
   Spanish

   English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0 %

   \[1 \text{ Total number ELL}\]

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 54 %

   Total number students who qualify: 118
8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504: 11%

Total number of students served: 25

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. All students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504 should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- 1 Autism
- 0 Deafness
- 0 Deaf-Blindness
- 1 Developmental Delay
- 1 Emotional Disturbance
- 1 Hearing Impairment
- 0 Intellectual Disability
- 1 Multiple Disabilities
- 0 Orthopedic Impairment
- 4 Other Health Impaired
- 10 Specific Learning Disability
- 6 Speech or Language Impairment
- 0 Traumatic Brain Injury
- 0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 3

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrators</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teacher, algebra teacher.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource teachers/specialists/coaches</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>supporting single, group, or classroom students.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student support personnel</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>physical health service providers, psychologists, family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 15:1
12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily student attendance</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduation rate</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2021.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post-Secondary Status</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduating class size</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled in a 4-year college or university</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled in a community college</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled in career/technical training program</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Found employment</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joined the military or other public service</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes _ X No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school’s mission or vision statement.

To offer today's students a universal education in a safe, rigorous, and engaging environment that will inspire their greatness, prompt their creativity, push them to achieve, encourage their personal growth, and prepare them to be tomorrow’s leaders. Vision: "A caring community that serves, engages, educates and empowers all to excel."

16. Provide a URL link to or text of the school’s nondiscrimination policy.

The Board is committed to providing a safe learning and work environment where all members of the school community are treated with dignity and respect. The schools in the district are subject to all federal and state laws and constitutional provisions prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, ancestry or need for special education services.

Accordingly, no otherwise qualified student, employee, applicant for employment or member of the public shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to unlawful discrimination under any district program or activity on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, creed, religion, sex (which includes marital status), sexual orientation (which includes transgender), disability or need for special education services. Discrimination against employees and applicants for employment based on age, genetic information and conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth is also prohibited in accordance with state and/or federal law.

17. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.
PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW

The school's core values are as follows. All opportunities for student learning exist within a safe environment of respect, honesty, and integrity. Our main purpose is to improve student academic achievement. We maintain high expectations for all staff and students. All students have the right to be challenged or provided intervention to achieve their full academic potential. Effective instruction makes the most difference in student achievement.

The Sanford School District is a small rural district located in the San Luis Valley consisting of approximately 357 students in grades PK-12. The District houses a preschool program with the option of students attending in either the morning or afternoon. This school has maintained a full-time kindergarten program for many years. The Elementary School consists of grades PK-6, Junior High consists of grades 7-8 and the High School consists of grades 9-12, all of which are housed within the same building. As a whole, the District has a 57% free and reduced population and a 31% minority population. 22% of the students attending the District live outside the District and choose to attend. Sanford High School embraces three vocational programs and clubs, Business-FBLA, Family and Consumer Science-FCCLA, and Construction, welding, and Ag science-FFA. We currently support a one-to-one technology program for all students. Sanford School remains accredited and was Accredited with Distinction during the 2016 school year. The latest rating is Performance, the next to highest rating provided by the state of Colorado. Our community takes great pride in our school and is very supportive of all the academic as well as athletic programs provided for students. Sanford School District students have received honors at the District, Regional, State, and National levels. Our students take great pride in their school and their accomplishments.

Academics are our top priority but sports are a very close second. The whole community comes to the games to support the teams. We have a unique situation because we have PK-12 in one building. The various grade levels interact with each other. High schoolers visit the lower grade levels and vice-versa. We are truly one big happy family. We have a Big Buddy, Little Buddy program. The 6th graders work with the kindergarteners throughout the year on various projects. At the end of the year we have a celebration to commemorate their work together. Last year we had a picnic with the Kindergarteners, 6th graders and seniors that started the big buddy program.

We have very active parents that set high expectations for their children. The parents volunteer in the classrooms and represent themselves on the district accountability team. Our teachers continue to hold the students to high standards and are constantly communicating with parents on the progress and challenges of their child.

During the 3rd quarter of this school year, we implemented elementary elective periods. The teachers create an elective that is of interest to them and the students are surveyed to see which elective they would like to attend. The students are then mixed up into new groups and attend the elective once a week.

Each year a softball tournament is played. The students play for the last nine weeks of school during their recess. Captains are chosen based on grades, behavior, and leadership skills. The captains choose teams and play one another. The winning team at the end plays the teachers on the last day of school. This activity promotes physical activity. Other activities that promote physical activity are our fun run, community walk fundraiser, and other activities supported by the Wellness Grant.

The school also employs a full-time counselor for K-6 students. She uses the Character Strong Curriculum to provide character trait lessons each week. The trait changes monthly. The counselor uses diverse children's literature to connect the concepts to real life. Or counselor also puts together a career fair for students in grades K-12. This provides students the opportunity to explore pathways for their future.

We are a Leader in Me school. Over the years, the programming has gotten watered down, but the 7 habits ae still engrained in teachers and students. The teachers still refer to the habits and use them to motivate and praise students.
PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

1a. Overall approach, which may include overarching philosophy or approaches common across subject areas:
Sanford Elementary believes in setting and maintaining high expectations for all students and staff. We believe that in order for students to succeed, they must be taught the standards and held accountable for the mastery of those standards. Data analysis is a large part of our success. It is consistent and constant. We continually analyze the progress and make adjustments when students are not showing the expected growth. Every child in grades K-3 receive and extra thirty minutes of instruction in math and reading daily. The 4-6th graders receive the thirty minutes for each subject every other day of the week giving them one extra hour of math and one extra hour of reading a week. Students are ability-grouped and receive instruction based on their needs. The instruction can be for intervention or enrichment.

1b. Reading/English language arts curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:
This year we adopted the McGraw Hill Wonders programming for reading. The program is aligned to the Colorado State Standards. The program has a strong phonics component and the sequence matched with how teachers like to teach the phonics. The stories are authentic and engaging and the illustrations are very clear, and colorful. The program comes with companion workbooks that support students' thinking and reflection on the stories. The Wonders provided a lot more opportunities for students to think about the reading, write responses to reading and justify their thinking. Overall, the teachers appreciated many components of the program. The teachers have worked diligently to implement the new program with fidelity and have see a great amount of growth in our students as readers and their phonetic skills. We use Write Reflections for writing. The program was adopted because of the organizational element to writing. We would that our students have really great ideas, but lack the organizational skills to put them into a strong paragraph that would convey their needs. We have noticed a big change in our students as writers in the past two year since adopting the new writing program. Two years ago the school partnered with the Colorado Department of Education to being the Istation assessment into the school. The assessment is given monthly and gives the teachers and students a comprehensive look at their reading skills. It shows them their successes and challenges and gives teachers direction of what needs to be taught next to progress the students. We also use the Renaissance STAR Reading Assessment. We are writing our ELA curriculum this year.

The standards are addressed in a logical sequence that makes since for teachers and students. The teachers use the Wonders program as a guide for the sequence of the year, but continue to review the standards and make sure they are all taught. A variety of instructional strategies are used for literacy. They range from direct instruction to group work. The lower grade levels utilize small guided reading groups to boost students' reading skills. The upper grades do a lot of partner work to reflect upon the text and share their ideas and justifications. The teachers constantly differentiate with students and provide a gradual release model. Technology is also utilized when appropriate to enhance the learning.

1c. Mathematics curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:
We are currently using a very outdated version of the Saxon math. The school would like to adopt a new math program with the help of grant funds that being applied for. The Colorado Department of Education is providing grant funds to adopt a new program from a recommended list. We are working quickly to hopefully secure some of those funds to update our math instruction. However, Saxon has given the students a strong computation foundation. Sanford hopes the new program will provide more opportunities for the students to become critical thinkers in relation to mathematics. We currently use the Renaissance Star Math Assessment. In addition to the above mentioned instructional strategies, center work is also utilized during math. The students are instructed and then move through centers to practice their new skills and review previously taught skills.
1d. Science curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

Our science textbooks are also outdated, but we teach from the standards and supplement quite a bit with outside resources so the students are provided with engaging and relevant lessons. The K-3 students receive science instruction twice a week and the 4-6 grades receive it daily during a class period. The students do some hands-on learning in science, but without an elementary lab it is difficult to do experiments and more project-based learning. They do frequently choose a topic and create a project to present their learning. Sometimes these projects are posters, pamphlets, dioramas, or other ideas the students have.

1e. Social studies/history/civic learning curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

The 4-6th grades have text books aligned to the social studies standards and receive instruction daily. The K-3 students are taught from the standards but do not currently have a specific program. Like the science, the teachers supplement materials for the lessons. The same applies to Social Studies as to the Science. Projects are done frequently to show what students have learned regarding a topic.

1f. For secondary schools:

1g. For schools that offer preschool for three- and/or four-year old students:

The Preschool uses the Creative Curriculum from Teaching Strategies and it covers all content areas and social emotional learning. We believe that our students transition more smoothly to kindergarten if they have attended our preschool. We also know that they are better equipped with basic skills such as writing their name and cutting if they attend preschool before kindergarten in our district. Colorado has aligned the preschool standards with those from the grades above. We follow the state standards so we are in alignment with all grades.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

The students at Sanford Elementary are given the opportunity to join the art club once they reach the 3rd grade. The primary grades incorporate art into their daily lessons and provide a variety of crafty opportunities for students throughout the year. Each year we have a drama club that students may try out for a part in the musical performance. The students try out, practice and perform for the rest of the school and the community. Grades K-3 attend physical education classes twice a week and alternate with music class the other two days of the week. Students in grades 4-6 receive physical education and music daily for thirty-five minutes. Once a week the students also attend a library/STEM class. The librarian provides the students with a STEM lesson and supports them in checking out books from the library. The school counselor meets with each class once a week to provide lesson on character building and/or career and life-skills. We also have a contract with a mental health counselor that seeks students on a weekly basis to support their mental health needs.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

As previously stated all students receive the additional thirty minutes of reading and math instruction on a daily basis. If students are well below grade level we will provide additional time for instruction or provide them with one on one instruction. All the teachers do an excellent job of differentiating for every student. They may provide modifications or accommodation to the independent work. The teachers also differentiate instruction by asking leveled questions depending on the student.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

The additional thirty minutes of instruction provides the teacher time to provide enrichment instruction to the students who are performing above grade level. We also have a gifted and talented program.
students qualify for the program and have a separate meeting time throughout the week to enhance their gifted skills.

3c. Special education:

The special education teachers provide goal-oriented instruction for all special education students. Depending on the student, the services are provided in a push-in situation where the child is included in the general education classroom or pulled out to work in a small group or individually. Our special services such as speech, physically therapy and occupational therapy are provided by the local BOCES service providers.

3d. English Language Learners, if a special program or intervention is offered:

With only one English language learner, accommodations are provided in the classrooms.

3e. Other populations (e.g., migrant, homeless), if a special program or intervention is offered:
PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

We have supportive teachers who work diligently to build relationships with each of their students. Our students genuinely want to come to school. Our teachers provide engaging lessons that are fun and they also provide student choice. The teachers at Sanford Elementary are uplifting and have true concern for students. They are willing to go the extra mile each and every day to support the students. As stated above, the teachers set high expectations for students and the students rise to the occasion. The administration is constantly checking the morale of students and staff and providing rewards for a job well done. We recognize staff on a consistent basis so that they know they are valued. Sometimes it is the little things that make the biggest impact. The principal has a background in cognitive coaching and provides coaching for teachers so that they may better their craft rather than providing evaluations of lessons all the time. There is a culture of "getting better and better" that is set for teachers and students.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Sanford Elementary has very active parents. They want to be in the schools supporting teachers and their children. We have a Welcome Back to School night and two parent teacher conferences throughout the year. We encourage parents to spend time in the classrooms and at various functions at the school. The teachers provide positive communication to parents often so when there is a challenging behavior or issue they are more willing to cooperate with the school. We have a very small community and not many businesses so it is difficult to get them involved. Through external partners, we are creating a family and community partnership plan that will bridge the small gap that still exists.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

"The administration is constantly checking the morale of students and staff and providing rewards for a job well done. We recognize staff on a consistent basis so that they know they are valued. Sometimes it is the little things that make the biggest impact. The principal has a background in cognitive coaching and provides coaching for teachers so that they may better their craft rather than providing evaluations of lessons all the time. There is a culture of "getting better and better" that is set for teachers and students." Our professional development days are limited, but we try our best to provide the development teachers need to improve their instruction and hone their craft.

4. School Leadership:

The elementary principal is intentional in building and maintaining relationships with all staff and students in the school. She greets students and staff at the door and has an open-door policy. Teachers and students are always welcome to step in for a chat. She sees herself as a facilitator rather than the principal in charge. She gives voice and choice to teachers in situations that will affect them. The principal encourages feedback from the students and teacher on how the school should function. This has been a shift in the last three years since the new principal was hired.

The elementary principal has trained teachers to gather and analyze data so it can be used to guide instruction. The students are progress monitored consistently. The curriculum has been updated and resources purchased so the school can be "modernized."

The elementary principal believes that teachers should have voice regarding decisions that will directly affect them. Depending on the situation a variety of leadership styles are utilized. Transformational, Strategic and Laissez-Faire. As a principal I always want teachers to be thinking about how we can make the good, great. Or the best, better. I want my teachers to continue to provide high expectations for students and themselves and continue to reach to greater heights by revising their goals. I strategically make the executive decisions and try to shelter the teachers from some of the higher level decisions that need to be made, but will seek their input if necessary. I want them to be able to focus on the day to day in their
classrooms and keep their attention on the students and their progress. I give my teachers equal weight on
certain matters such as curriculum and programming that we may be looking to purchase. I may provide
some guidance for the process, but ultimately I leave the decisions up to them because they are in the
trenches and I want them to have buy-in.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

As a district, we do not have a very diverse population. We admit that we need to do better to provide
cultural awareness for our students. However, our librarian does a good job of highlighting authors from
various background in the library each month. She does thematic units on different cultures so that students
will have an understanding of other cultures and their traditions around the world.

Students in grades K-12 are encouraged to discuss current events. Teachers provide an unbiased
environment where all opinions and sides of an issue can be discussed openly without prejudice.
I believe the students and their families make the school what it is. We have amazing individuals that make up our school. The parents are involved and supportive of the education system. The students enjoy coming to school. They love their teachers. Our teachers are high quality and would do anything for any kid. The administration is supportive and cares about the student and teacher needs. They set the stage for the climate. They are caring, compassionate and passionate about educating students. Every decision made is one that directly supports teachers and students. The school board is also very supportive. The people of Sanford have high morale values and are 100% committed to assisting in the education of children. The PEOPLE make Sanford.